ABSTRACT

This invention relates to methods for reducing background fluorescence in cell detection and measurement systems. In accordance with one aspect of the invention, cell-impermeant chemical agents are used to modify the fluorescent probes that reside outside the cells to be detected. The chemical agents can chemically modify one or more functional groups in the probes, thereby reducing or eliminating the fluorescence of the probes. In accordance with another aspect of the invention, Acid Black 48 is used to reduce background fluorescence produced by fluorescent probes such as SYTO 62.